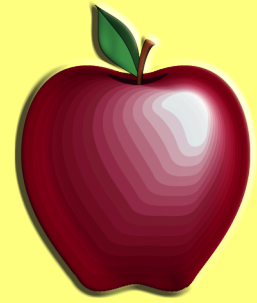


# Health Care

## ...Pathways to Change



### TOPIC: What's at Stake, What's the Approach?

#### A SHARED CHALLENGE

The national trend toward rising health care costs poses a challenge for the University of California and the Los Alamos National Laboratory. Nationally, costs are rising 22 percent on average, according to a recent survey by Hewitt Associates, a human resources consulting firm. This trend is expected to continue into the foreseeable future.

At Los Alamos, increasing health care costs are especially threatening because:

- Employees, retirees and their families will have to spend a greater portion of their disposable income on health care.
- The Lab may find it harder to attract and retain high-talent employees.
- The Lab will have to devote additional funds to health care rather than to programs essential to its mission.

#### A SHARED RESPONSE

In response to the inevitability of rising health care costs, UC and the Lab - with the support of the National Nuclear Security Administration - are evaluating what changes will be necessary to continue to provide plan participants with quality health insurance that is affordable for them and the Lab.

Central to this process is a commitment by UC and the Lab to work jointly to research, identify and analyze alternatives to meet the health care challenge - and to listen to the various groups and individuals who share this challenge and to consider their comments in addressing the need for change.

This joint UC/Lab initiative is called "Health Care: Pathways to Change."

Exactly what changes will be necessary to the Lab's health care program or when they will take place is currently being defined. However, regardless of the changes, it is clear that employees and retirees - like their colleagues throughout the UC system - can expect their health care contributions to increase next year, along with other program changes in 2004.

#### WHAT YOU CAN DO

**Be informed** - Watch for articles on the health care situation in Lab and UC publications and in the general media, attend presentations and meetings on the issue, and visit the Lab's "Pathways to Change" Web site.

**Speak up** - Ask questions, state your views and discuss the situation at presentations and meetings or through other opportunities. The Web site features a way for employees to submit questions and receive answers on the health care initiative.

**Take the survey** - A survey will be distributed soon, both online and by mail, for plan participants to provide information about how they currently use their health care plans and to state their preferences regarding potential plan options. The survey is one of the most effective ways to make sure your opinions and ideas become part of the health care program design process.

Visit the "Pathways to Change" web site

For internal users: <http://int.lanl.gov/worklife/benefits/healthmatters.shtml>  
For external users: <http://www.lanl.gov/worldview/welcome/health.shtml>